



Utah State Law Library

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Research Guide: Utah Legislative Resources

§1 Introduction

The legislative branch makes laws. The Utah Legislature consists of a Senate and a House of Representatives.¹ House members are elected to two year terms;² Senate members are elected to four year terms.³

In order to be eligible to be a Utah legislator, a person must be:⁴

- A US citizen
- 25 years old
- Qualified voter in the district they are running in
- A resident of Utah for three consecutive years immediately prior to filing deadline
- A resident of the district for six consecutive months immediately prior to the filing deadline

The Utah legislature is made up of 75 Representatives members and 29 Senators. The legislative session starts on the third Monday in January⁵ and runs for 45 calendar days,⁶ which includes weekends and holidays, although it usually only meets Monday - Friday.

§2 Session Laws

Session laws are the laws enacted during the legislative session, in chronological order.

§2.1 Territorial Session Laws

Utah's territorial legislature consisted of the Council and the House of Representatives.⁷

The fourth (1854-55), fifteenth (1865-66) and twenty-second (1876) territorial session laws were not separately published and are found in compilations only. The session laws of the seventh session (1857) were not contemporaneously published.

Laws of the Territory of Utah: passed at the ... session of the Legislative Assembly. Salt Lake City: various publishers. 1851-1894, 1st – 31st session.

¹ Constitution of Utah, Article VI §1

² Constitution of Utah, Article VI §3

³ Constitution of Utah, Article VI §4

⁴ Constitution of Utah, Article VI §5

⁵ Constitution of Utah, Article VI §2

⁶ Constitution of Utah, Article VI §16

⁷ An Act to Establish a Territorial Government for Utah, ch.51 §4, 9 Stat. 453 (September 9, 1850).

Legislative Acts, Resolutions, and Memorial Journals, 1850-1911 (Series 3148)

Held by the Utah State Archives

Handwritten journal in which acts of the legislature are entered chronologically as they were passed and approved.

Acts, resolutions and memorials, passed at the several annual sessions of the Legislative Assembly of the territory of Utah, to which is prefixed: the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of the Confederation, the Ordinance of 1787, the Constitution of the United States, and amendments thereto, the naturalization laws, the constitution of the provisional state of Deseret, the Deseret laws, and the Organic act of Utah. Published by virtue of an act approved Jan. 19, 1855. Great Salt Lake City: Joseph Cain, public printer, 1855.

Available online: J. Willard Marriott Library Digital Collections: Utah Historical Statutes
<http://content.lib.utah.edu/cdm4/browse.php?CISOROOT=/uthisstat>

Acts, resolutions and memorials passed by the Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Utah : during the seventh annual session, for the years 1857-58. Salt Lake City: Shepard Book Company, 1919.

Acts, resolutions and memorials, passed at the several annual sessions, of the Legislative assembly of the Territory of Utah, to which is prefixed the Declaration of independence, the Articles of the confederation, the Ordinance of 1787, the Constitution of the United States, and amendments thereto, the naturalization laws, and the Organic act of Utah, and with which is embodied a number of law forms. Published by virtue of an act approved Jan. 19, 1866. Great Salt Lake City: Henry McEwan, public printer, 1866.

Available online: J. Willard Marriott Library Digital Collections: Utah Historical Statutes
<http://content.lib.utah.edu/cdm4/browse.php?CISOROOT=/uthisstat>

The compiled laws of the Territory of Utah: containing all the general statutes now in force, to which is prefixed the Declaration of Independence, Constitution of the United States, Organic Act of Utah, and laws of congress especially applicable to this Territory. Salt Lake City: Deseret News Steam Printing Establishment, 1876.

Available online: J. Willard Marriott Library Digital Collections: Utah Historical Statutes
<http://content.lib.utah.edu/cdm4/browse.php?CISOROOT=/uthisstat>

§2.2 State Session Laws

The legislative power of the State of Utah rests with the Senate and the House of Representatives.⁸

Laws of the State of Utah. Salt Lake City: various publishers. 1896-ongoing, 1st session - .

⁸ Constitution of Utah, Art. VI §1 (1896).

§2.3 Online Session Laws

Legislature's Website

<http://le.utah.gov>

- Select **Bills / Passed Bills**
- Select the legislative session
- Click on "Chapter" to sort that column by session law number

Lexis

Database: UTALS (current legislative session)

Westlaw

Database: UT-LEGIS (current legislative session)

Database: UT-LEGIS-OLD (1990-next most current legislative session)

§3 Legislative Journals

Journals are the official record of legislative actions during the session.

§3.1 Territorial Legislative Journals

The journals of the Council and House of Representatives were published together until 1880, and were published separately 1882-1894. According to the State Archives, a copy of the legislative journals for the Fifth session (1855-56) have not been found. The legislative journals of the Seventh session (1857-58) were not published until 1956.

Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Utah, of the ... session of the Legislature. Salt Lake City: various publishers. [1851/52]-1880
1st – 24th territorial session

Everett L. Cooley, *Journals of the Legislative Assembly Territory of Utah Seventh Annual Session, 1857-1858*, 24 Utah Hist. Q. 107, 237 and 339 (1956)

Reprint of the unpublished copies of the "minutes" of the seventh session (1857-1858) of the territorial assembly held by the Utah State Archives. The journals weren't published contemporaneously because of the impending arrival of Johnston's Army sent to quell the purported Mormon rebellion against federal authority.

Legislative Council Journal Record Books, 1858-1882 (Series 3167)

Held by the Utah State Archives

Handwritten minutes of the Council from the 8th through the 25th legislative sessions.

Council Journal of the ... session of the Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Utah. Salt Lake City: various publishers. 1882-1894
25th – 31st territorial session

House, Journal Record Books, 1858-1878 (Series 16660)

Held by the Utah State Archives

Handwritten minutes of the House from the 8th through the 23rd legislative sessions.

House Journal of the ... session of the Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Utah. Salt Lake City: various publishers. 1882-1894
25th – 31st territorial session

§3.2 State Legislative Journals

Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Utah ... session of the Legislature. Salt Lake City: various publishers. 1896-ongoing, 1st session - .

Senate Journal, ... session of the ... Legislature of the State of Utah. Salt Lake City: various publishers. 1896-ongoing, 1st session - .

Newer legislative journals are available online, 1992-current
<http://le.utah.gov>

Select **Legislative Histories / Journals**

§4 Floor Debates

§4.1 House Floor Debates

House Floor debate recordings

- Available at the Utah State Archives, 1957-1989 (Series 23020)

- Available online, 1991-current

<http://le.utah.gov>

Select **Legislative Histories / Past House Floor Debates**

The House is digitizing recordings of House floor debates back to 1990. Debates not yet on the website are available from the House.

§4.2 Senate Floor Debates

Senate Floor debate recordings

- Available at the Utah Senate, 1965-current

- Available online, 2002-current

<http://le.utah.gov>

Select **Legislative Histories / Past Senate Floor Debates**

The Senate is digitizing recordings of Senate floor debates back to 1990. Debates not yet on the website are available from the Senate.

§5 Bills

Legislative Assembly's *Territorial legislative records*, 1851-1894. (Series 3150)

Held by the Utah State Archives

Includes the acts, bills, resolutions and memorials of the territorial legislature.

House. *Working bills*, 1896-ongoing. (Series 432)

Held by the Utah State Archives

Senate. *Working bills*, 1896-ongoing. (Series 428)

Held by the Utah State Archives

Lt. Governor. *Legislative bills*, 1896-ongoing. (Series 4076)

Held by the Utah State Archives

Also known as engrossed, enrolled, or final bills.

Newer bills are available online, 1990-current

<http://le.utah.gov>

Select **Bills**

Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel. *Bill drafting and research records.*

Includes bill drafts, amendments, correspondence and research. Also known as *Bill drafting and research files.*

- Available on microfiche at the Utah State Archives, 1980-1989 (Series 7073)

- Available online, 1990-current

<http://le.utah.gov>

Select **Bills / 1990-Ongoing Bill Files**

§6 Committee Resources

§6.1 Committee Minutes

House. *Standing committee minutes*

- Available in print at the Utah State Archives, 1967-current (Series 3159)

- Available online, 1999-current

<http://le.utah.gov>

Select **Committees / Standing Committees**

Select the standing committee and the year

Senate. *Standing committee minutes*

- Available at the Utah State Archives, 1972-current (Series 18459)

- Available online, 1999-current

<http://le.utah.gov>

Select **Committees / Standing Committees**

Select the standing committee and the year

Appropriation committee minutes

- Available from the Legislative Fiscal Analyst, 1967-current

- Available online, current session

<http://le.utah.gov>

§6.2 Committee Audio Recordings

House. *Standing committee audio recordings*

- Available at the Utah State Archives, 1994-current (Series 23013)

- Available at the Utah House on CD, 1996-current

- Available online, July 2005-current

<http://le.utah.gov>

Select **Committees / Standing Committees**

Select the standing committee and the year

Senate. *Standing committee audio recordings*

- Available at the Utah State Archives, 1994-current (Series 21084)

- Available online, July 2005-current

<http://le.utah.gov>

Select **Committees / Standing Committees**

Select the standing committee and the year

Interim Committee Recordings
- Available online, 2005-current
<http://le.utah.gov>

§6.3 Other Committee Resources

Annual Appropriation Reports
- Available at Legislative Fiscal Analyst, 1967-current
- Available online, 1995-current
<http://le.utah.gov>

Interim Committee Histories
Committee histories include meeting agenda, minutes, and resource materials related to upcoming legislation.
- Available on microfiche at the Utah State Archives, 1967-1989 (Series 7230)
- Available online, 1990-current
<http://le.utah.gov>
Select **Legislative Histories / Interim Committee Histories**

Legislative Interim Report
Summaries of legislation recommended by legislative committees for the upcoming legislative session. The report also contains a summary of pertinent interim committee, commission and task force studies.

Also known as:

Reports and recommendations of the Utah Legislative Council (1948-1974)
Interim progress report to 1970 budget session (1969)
Interim progress report and recommendations to the 1972 budget session (1971)
Interim report to the Utah Legislature - budget session (1974)
Interim study committee progress report (January 1976)
Interim study committee final reports (December 1976)
Interim study committee progress report (January 1978)
Interim study committee final reports (December 1978)
Interim study committee reference bulletin (1980-1996)
General Session Preview (1997-2003)
Legislative Interim Report (2003-current)
- Available on microfilm at the Utah State Archives, 1948-1993 (Series 22117)
- Available at the Legislative Research Library & Information Center, 1948-current
- Available online, 1994-current
<http://le.utah.gov>
Select **Publications / Legislative Interim Report**

§7 Other Legislative Documents

Briefing Papers
- Available at the Legislative Research Library & Information Center, 1983-current
- Available online, 2001-current
<http://le.utah.gov>
Select **Publications / Briefing Papers**

Digest of Legislation

- Available at the Utah State Archives, 1949-current (Series 17929)
- Available at the Legislative Research Library & Information Center, 1979-current
- Available online, 2001-current

<http://le.utah.gov>

Select **Publications / Digest of Legislation**

Legislative Drafting Manual

- Available online, current edition

<http://le.utah.gov>

Select **Publications / Drafting Manual**

Research reports

- Available at the Utah State Archives, 1976-current (Series 24138)
- Available at the Legislative Research Library & Information Center, 1976-current

Task Force Reports

- Available online, 1998 & 2003 only

<http://le.utah.gov>

Select **Publications / Task Force Reports**

§8 Legislative History Guides

How to Research Legislative History
from the University of Utah S.J. Quinney Law Library

http://www.law.utah.edu/_files/library/ulh.pdf

Legislative Intent & Legislative History

from the Utah State Archives

<http://historyresearch.utah.gov/guides/leghist.htm>

§9 Contact Information

Legislative Fiscal Analyst

W310 House Building

801-326-1600

Legislative Printing

W215 House Building

801-538-1103

Legislative Research Library & Information Center

W320 House Building

801-362-1600

Utah House

W30 House Building

801-538-1029

Utah Senate

W115 House Building

801-538-1035

Utah State Archives

300 S. Rio Grande Street

801-533-3535

<http://uhrc.utah.gov/>